

RESOLUTION NO. 355

REQUESTING THE COUNTY'S DELEGATION IN THE U.S. CONGRESS TO TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT THE CLOSING OF TWO U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AGENCIES IN ALBANY COUNTY

Introduced: 8/13/07

By Messrs. Gordon, Houghtaling, Reilly, Aylward, Shafer, Burke, Cotrofeld, Horstmyer, Nichols, Dawson and Clouse:

WHEREAS, The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to close the offices of the Farm Service Agency and the Natural Resource Conservation Service at the County's William Rice Jr. Extension Center Building in Voorheesville, a move which would have a severe negative impact on Albany County agriculture, and

WHEREAS, The two federal agencies, which for more than three decades have provided numerous services and distributed federal funds for agriculture and conservation projects benefiting Albany County farmers, have been notified that their offices would be relocated outside the County in a reorganization plan to reduce rental expenses, and

WHEREAS, Agriculture is an important segment of Albany County's economy, which in 2002 accounted for \$19.355 million in sales of farm products and provided income for families operating 484 farms of all sizes, and

WHEREAS, A 2002 Census of Agriculture in Albany County compiled by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, New York Agricultural Statistics Service, reported that the market value of agricultural products sold per farm averaged \$39,990 and included sales from hay and grains to support beef and dairy farms, livestock, poultry and their products and fruits, vegetables, Christmas trees, greenhouse and nursery crops, and

WHEREAS, The FSA, which distributes \$500,000 a year to farm operators throughout the County, and the NRCS, which advises farmers on agronomics, pollution abatement, soil nutrition and wildlife habitat management, work alongside Cornell Cooperative Extension out of leased quarters at 24 Martin Road in the Town of New Scotland, now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Albany County Legislature requests U.S. Senators Hillary Clinton and Charles Schumer and U.S. Representative Michael McNulty to intervene on behalf of Albany County to prevent the closing of the Farm Service Agency and Natural Resource Conservation Service offices in Albany County, and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the County Legislature is directed to forward certified copies of this resolution to Senators Clinton and Schumer and Representative McNulty and to the appropriate County Officials.

Adopted by unanimous vote. 8/13/07